

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 215515

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, WA

SUBJECT: HARSH SAG MEASURES IN SWA

REF: PRETORIA 3884

1. IN DEPARTMENT'S VIEW, HARD LINE SAG APPEARS TO BE PURSUING AGAINST DISSIDENTS IN SWA NOT ONLY CONTRARY TO RIGHTS OF THE PEOPLE THERE BUT ALSO HINDERS EFFORTS TO FIND A PRACTICAL APPROACH TO THE PROBLEM IN THE UN. IN EFFORT TO CONVINCE SAG OF LIKELY ADVERSE EFFECTS OF COURSE IT IS FOLLOWING IN SWA, BELIEVE IT WOULD BE USEFUL FOR EMBASSY TO APPROACH DFA AT APPROPRIATE HIGH LEVEL (PERMANENT OR DEPUTY SECRETARY) AND MAKE REPRESENTATIONS ALONG FOLLOWING LINES:

A. U.S. IS CONCERNED AT REPORTS COMING OUT OF TERRITORY TO EFFECT LARGE NUMBER OF PEOPLE BEING DETAINED INCOMMUNICADO WITHOUT ACCESS TO COUNSEL OR COURTS AND SOME BEING SUBJECTED TO HARSH, NON-JUDICIAL PUNISHMENT.

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OF PARTICULAR CONCERN ARE REPORTS THAT INDIVIDUALS

SERVING SENTENCES FOR RELATIVELY MINOR OFFENSES HAVE BEEN TURNED OVER BY THE SOUTH AFRICAN AUTHORITIES TO TRIBAL AUTHORITIES AND SUBJECTED TO CRUEL BEATINGS. ALSO OF SERIOUS CONCERN TO US IS FACT THAT SUBSTANTIAL PORTION OF INTERNATIONAL TERRITORY IS VIRTUALLY COMPLETELY CLOSED TO OBSERVERS FROM OUTSIDE.

B. THESE DEVELOPMENTS HAVE ALREADY RECEIVED A GOOD DEAL OF PUBLICITY AND ARE BOUND TO RECEIVE CONSIDERABLE ATTENTION IN THE UN DEBATES ON THE PROBLEM. THEY WILL BE TAKEN AS INDICATIONS OF A LACK OF GOOD FAITH ON THE PART OF SOUTH AFRICA IN SEARCHING FOR AN ACCEPTABLE SOLUTION. WE DO NOT BELIEVE SOUTH AFRICA WILL BE ABLE TO AVOID BEING HELD RESPONSIBLE FOR THESE DEVELOPMENTS OR FOR ACTION OF TRIBAL AUTHORITIES SINCE THE SAG IS ACCOUNTABLE FOR VIOLATIONS OF THE RIGHTS OF THE PEOPLE OF THE TERRITORY AS LONG AS IT REMAINS THERE.

C. FINALLY, WE BELIEVE THESE DEVELOPMENTS COMPLICATE THE PROBLEM OF BUILDING SUPPORT FOR MEASURES, WHICH WE FAVOR, FOR RESOLVING THE PROBLEM THROUGH COMMUNICATIONS AND DISCUSSIONS AMONG ALL THE PARTIES CONCERNED. WE WOULD HOPE THAT ALL PARTIES WOULD DISPLAY AN ATTITUDE OF RESTRAINT AND ACCOMMODATION WHICH MIGHT GIVE THESE MEASURES A CHANCE TO SUCCEED. KISSINGER

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